

assembly in a direction to wind up the elongated blade when extending outwardly of said housing assembly opening in a normal concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration onto said reel in an abutting volute coil formation in a flattened cross-sectional configuration; and

A1 a blade holding assembly constructed and arranged to be manually actuated to hold the blade in any position of extension outwardly of said housing assembly opening and to release the blade from any position in which it is held;

said elongated metal blade being made of steel and having a width in said flattened configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of approximately 1.25" – 1.39", and a height in the concavo-convex configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of 0.30" – 0.35".

Please add new claims 2 - 11 as follows:

A2 2. (New) A retractable rule assembly according to claim 1, wherein said elongated metal blade has a width in the flattened configuration thereof of approximately 1.25".

3. (New) A retractable rule assembly comprising
a housing assembly;
a reel rotatably mounted in said housing assembly;
an elongated blade formed of a ribbon of metal having one end connected to said reel constructed and arranged with respect to said housing assembly to extend from a position tangential to said reel outwardly through a spaced opening in said housing assembly;
a coil spring formed of a ribbon of metal having a construction and arrangement between said housing assembly and said reel to rotate said reel in said housing assembly in a direction to wind up the elongated blade when extending outwardly of said

housing assembly opening in a normal concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration onto said reel in an abutting volute coil formation in a flattened cross-sectional configuration; and

a blade holding assembly constructed and arranged to be manually actuated to hold the blade in any position of extension outwardly of said housing assembly opening and to release the blade from any position in which it is held;

A² said elongated metal blade having a width in said flattened configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of approximately 1.25" – 1.39" and a height in the concavo-convex configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of 0.25" – 0.40";

said elongated metal blade being made of steel and having a top concave surface of the blade printed with measuring lines and digits;

said concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration having an arcuate central section having a radius of curvature of approximately 0.30" to approximately 0.60", and two integrally formed end sections on opposite sides of said central section with a different configuration than said central section.

4. (New) A retractable rule assembly as claimed in claim 3, wherein said end sections are arcuate.

5. (New) A retractable rule assembly as claimed in claim 4, wherein said arcuate end sections have a radius of curvature greater than said central section.

6. (New) A retractable rule assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said radius of curvature of said end arcuate sections is between approximately 1.0" to approximately 5.0".

7. (New) A retractable rule assembly according to claim 3, wherein said elongated steel blade has a width in the flattened configuration thereof of approximately 1.25".

A² 8. (New) A retractable rule assembly according to claim 3, wherein said elongated steel blade has a height in the concavo-convex configuration thereof having a dimension of 0.30" – 0.35".

9. (New) A retractable rule assembly comprising
a housing assembly;
a reel rotatably mounted in said housing assembly;
an elongated blade formed of a ribbon of metal having one end connected to said reel constructed and arranged with respect to said housing assembly to extend from a position tangential to said reel outwardly through a spaced opening in said housing assembly;
a coil spring formed of a ribbon of metal having a construction and arrangement between said housing assembly and said reel to rotate said reel in said housing assembly in a direction to wind up the elongated blade when extending outwardly of said housing assembly opening in a normal concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration onto said reel in an abutting volute coil formation in a flattened cross-sectional configuration; and
a blade holding assembly constructed and arranged to be manually actuated to hold the blade in any position of extension outwardly of said housing assembly opening and to release the blade from any position in which it is held;

said elongated metal blade having a width in said flattened configuration thereof having a dimension of approximately 1.25" and a height in the concavo-convex configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of 0.30" – 0.35";

said elongated metal blade being made of steel and having a top concave surface of the blade printed with measuring lines and digits;

A² said concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration having an arcuate central section having a radius of curvature of approximately 0.30" to approximately 0.60", and two integrally formed end sections on opposite sides of said central section with a different configuration than said central section.

10. (New) A retractable rule assembly according to claim 9, wherein said end sections are arcuate.

11. (New) A retractable rule assembly according to claim 10, wherein said arcuate end sections have a radius of curvature greater than said central section.
